ONE OF THE SERMONS PREACHED

At Westminster:

The fifth of APRILL, (being the day of the Publike Fast;)

Before the Right Honourable Lords of the High Court of PARLIAMENT, and set forth by their appointment.

By the Bishop of SARVM.

LONDON,

Printed for *Richard Badger*, and are to be sold by *John Stampe* at his shop at the East end of S. *Dunstans* Church-yard in Fleet-street. 1628.

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Ieremie 3.22. the latter part of the Verse.

Behold, wee come vnto thee, for thou art the Lord, our God.

SOme wonderfull sight out of all question was heere to be seene, or else men neuer durst haue beene so bold, as to haue called to the great God of heauen to behold it. Some pleasing spectacle out of all doubt was to be exhibited, or else the great God of heauen would neuer haue vouchsafed the casting downe of his gratious eye vpon it. It was so indeed. A wonder aboue all other wonders: the stony and rebellious hearts of men suddenly turned, into soft and obedient hearts. A ioyfull spectacle vnto God aboue all other spectacles; runnagate seruants returning vnto the seruice of their Soueraigne Lord; rebellious children repenting

and running as it were into the bosome of their gratious God, and louing Father. If wee will beleeue him who is *Truth* it selfe, this is the principall, if not the onely sight vpon earth, which giues contentment, and brings ioy vnto Heauen, vnto the Saints, vnto the Angels, yea vnto the blessed Trinity it selfe. I haue chosen this, as a Text fitting the present occasion, because we are now doing the very same thing, which the Israelites then did: Fortell me, I pray, what doe we intend by this solemne generall Assembly, or what doe we pretend by this publique Fasting, Praying, and humbling our selues vnder the hand of Almighty God, but this serious protestation; *Behold, we come vnto thee, for thou art the Lord our God?* Bold, prophane, and wretched men we are if wee deride our Maker, and call vnto him, that he would out of heauen behold a Sight heere vpon earth when in truth there is no such Sight to bee seene. Dutifull, holy, and happy men we are, if God looking downe from heauen, behold in vs, that which we pretend, and he expects. Now that we may the better vnderstand what this is, let vs come to a particular consideration of the Text;

Luke 15.7.

which is nothing else, but a short and direct answer of Gods people, vnto a Proposition which God had made vnto them in the words immediately going before. Gods proposition was this: (*O returne yee backsliding children, and I will heale your rebellions*) The Israelites answer hereunto, is very punctuall and direct. (*Behold, we come vnto thee for thou art the Lord, our God.*) In which answer, we may obserue these two generall parts:

1. A protestation of their sincere obedience, (*Behold, wee come vnto thee.*) 1

2. A declaration of the motiue inducing them thereunto, *For thou art the Lord, our God.* 2

This protestation consists not of many words, and yet it containes many matters of great importance; which I will speake of in order, as the words shall offer them vnto me.

1. The first is the Inward Obedience of their Hearts, implied in the word, *Ecce*, *Behold*: For howsoeuer the Heart bee not expressely named, yet this *Ecce*, calls as it were vpon God, to take notice of the secret resolution of their hearts, and to behold their obedience, in bowing and bending of them, vnto his most iust, and holy commands. In all acceptable 1

table obedience vnto God, the Heart must be the ringleader: if that be wanting, the seeming good actions of a Heartlesse Christian, are but like the walking or stirring of a liueles body, which affrights many, but pleaseth no beholder. *Omnia honesta opera volunt as inchoar.* It is the Heart or Will, which giues the beginning vnto euery good action: and this is it which in the first place the Israelites presented vnto God: And surely there was good reason, and a iust cause of their so doing.

Seneca.

First, because their vnfaithfull and stubborne heart was it, that had lead them out into open rebellion against God; and therefore it was necessarily required, that a loyall and obedient heart, should also be their Leader, in this their Submission, and comming in vnto Almighty God. Againe, whensoeuer God calls vnto a Sinner to returne, his meaning is, that his heart should first answer vnto the call: *My Sonne giue me thy heart*; and *Hebrewes* the 10.22. *Let vs draw neere vnto God with a true heart.* As good stay behinde, as come when God calls, and leaue our hearts behinde. Last of all, it is the Heart vpon which Gods eyes are principally fixed, whensoeuer we present

our humble seruice vnto him: and it is one of his Royall Prerogatiues, to be the Discerner of Hearts. Wee may therefore well suppose, that these Israelites durst neuer haue called God to Behold their comming, had not their hearts beene their leaders. For they could not be ignorant of that peremptory conclusion. (*If I regard wickednesse in my heart, the Lord will not heare me.* Now if any man aske me whence came this admirable change, that men of brasen foreheads, and iron hearts, are so suddenly become men of humble, soft, and religious hearts; all that I can answer is this: The same God that had long called vnto them for their hearts, had now at length giuen them new hearts, and a new spirit, and had taken the stony heart out of their body, as the Prophet *Ezekiel* speakes. *Bona voluntas est hominis propria, sed Deo inspirante concepta.* A good will, or a good heart, is a mans owne when he hath it: but it is the diuine inspiration from whence hee hath it. Let vs now for a while leaue the consideration of these Israelites, and their new hearts, and come to consider our owne. We all make the same protestation this day, of our obedient and penitent hearts

Psal.66. 18.

Chap. 36. Verse 26.

Prosper.

which they did. Wee all in effect intreate GOD to looke downe from heauen, and to Behold this vnfeined and sincere resolution of our Hearts. Take heede of drawing neere vnto GOD with your lippes, and remooving your hearts farre from him. Be sure of that constant resolution which was in holy *Dauid*, when he made this profession: *I desire to doe thy good will (O my God) yea thy law is within my heart.* Psal. 40. *Pars prima bonitatis est velle fieri bonum.* The first part of goodnesse, is to haue the Will of beeing good. I cannot pierce into your hearts, and see your secret intentions and purposes: God can, and doth, and your owne hearts also can and doe take notice of your inward resolutions. Hath any man therefore had a filthy, lustfull, and adulterous heart; aske it whether it bee now resolued to keepe it selfe a pure, chaste, and vndefiled heart. Hath any man had a couetous or an ambitious proud heart, let him search into it, and see whether it now be resolued, to renounce the world, with all the vaine pompe and pride thereof. Hath any man had an vncharitable, contentious, and malicious heart; let him examine himselfe,

whether hee bee fully bent to purge out this old and sowre leauen of maliciousnesse or no.

If our outward humiliation be seuer'd from this inward resolution, What is it but (as *Tertullian* speakes) *Impietatis secreta superficialibus officijs obumbrare*. To hide the depths of wickednesse vnder a Superficies of holines. I hope there is none such here; but if there be, let them know, that a dissembling Nation is stiled, *The People of Gods wrath*; because hypocrites are (to vse the Philosophers phrase) *in vltima & proxima dispositione*, in the last, neerest, and fittest disposition, to take fire at the deuouring flame of Gods wrath. In this day therefore of our solemne Fast, and of our professed new obedience, it much imports vs to be sure that wee are sound, and not rotten at the heart; least when wee shall come hereafter to pleade with God, as those hypocriticall Iewes did; *Why haue we fasted, and thou seest it not. Why haue wee punished our selues, and thou regardest it not?* VVee receiue the same answer. *Behold, in the day of your fast, yee seeke your owne will; Behold, you fast to strife and debate.* If there be in our hearts a resolution

Aduersus Marc. 4.

Esay 10. Verse 6.

Esay 58.

onely

onely of abstaining from meate and drinke for certaine howres, but no purpose of waining our selues from our owne wills, all outward shews of intended reformation, will but make to our deeper condemnation. *Qui laudatur ab hominibus vituperante Deo, non saluabitur ab hominibus damnante Deo.* He who is praised of men, whilst God accuseth him, cannot be saued by men, when God will condemne him. But I am charitably perswaded, that euery one of vs, who this day present our selues vnto the view of God, hath brought with him a new heart, fully resolued vpon a new and holy life.

2 2. There is a second point now to bee considered in this Protestation of their obedience; and that is, the outward performance answerable to the inward resolution and purpose of their hearts: wherein I will first speake briefly of the Act it selfe, and then of the seuerall circumstances considerable in the same Act. This Act God expresseth by the name of Returning; (*O returne yee disobedient children.*) The Israelites terme it Comming. (*Behold, we come vnto thee.*) Both words note vnto vs one and the very same thing; to wit, the

forsaking

forsaking of our wicked and sinnefull waies and the walking in the vndefiled way of Gods Commandements. For as sinne, is *Auersio à Creatore, & conuersio ad creaturam*: An inordinate turning from God vnto the creature; so on the contrary, Godlinesse or righteousnesse, is a turning from the vaine creature, and a Returning or comming vnto God our Creator. *Ad Deum non locis mouemur sed moribus.* We come vnto God, not by shifting of places, but by changing of our manners and practises. Comming vnto the Church (as now we doe) is but comming vnto the materiall house of God: ceasing to doe euill, practising to doe well, that is our true returning vnto God. *Let the wicked forsake his waies, and the vnrighteous his owne imaginations; and returne vnto the Lord.* If there be not this outward practise, answerable vnto the pretended inward obedience of our hearts; out of question the former pretense was but false and counterfeit. *Nemo veraciter dicit, volo, qui non facit illud quod potest.* No man truely saies: I am in Will and Heart resolued, vnlesse according to his ability, he indeauour to performe his resolution.

Augst.

Es. 55. 7.

Parisiensis.

But euery man will alleage for himselfe, that he is none of those that come vnto God in pretended resolutions of obedience; hee comes in deed, that is, in the practise of a Godly life. Let vs examine a little the truth of this allegation. There is but one way of comming vnto God; there are many crooked by-paths (yet broad and beaten waies too) which carry vs quite away from him. He who walkes in the way, which Gods Word hath chalked out vnto him, he and none but he, is comming vnto God; and how few bee there that care either to finde or follow this way; They which follow the guidance of their own corrupt and crafty reason, may come vnto wealth or worldy preferment, but certainely by this way they can neuer come vnto God: and how many bee there that wander in this way all their life long. But the Apostle hath giuen them their doome. *The naturall man perceiues not the things which are of God, neither can he, for they are fooliſhneſſe vnto him.* 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. They which follow the bent of their owne sensuall appetite, may wallow in bodily and filthy pleasures; but by this way they can neuer come to God, nor to those pleasures *which*

are at his right hand for euermore. Last of al, they which walke in the way wherein the Multitude walkes, and follow onely the fashions of the present time, they may at length arriue at that place, where they shall meete with most company, but neuer there where they shall meete with God, and the best and most blessed company. *Tritissima quæque via maxime decipit.* The most beaten and broad way, leads vs farthest out of the right way. What therefore remaines, but onely this? If thou wouldest haue assurance, that thou art in the number of those that truely come vnto God, see whether thou takest his word for *a lanterne vnto thy feete, and a light vnto thy paths*; for this alone is the straight way chalked out by God, and bringing men vnto GOD. And let this suffice for the Act of our comming vnto God; the Circumstances of this act must now bee handled, which are in number three. *Seneca.*

The first is the Generality of the persons returning or comming vnto God, implied in the word, *Wee*; that is, All wee, the whole Congregation, *Behold, wee come.* Had not their comming beene a ioynt and generall comming, they could not thereby haue ob- 1

tained that which they ſought for. What was that? The remouall of ſuch heauie iudgements as lay vpon them, and the auerting of more heauie, which by the Prophets were threatned againſt them. A particular man by returning vnto God, may turne away a particular iudgement hanging ouer his owne head; but where the rebellion hath beene generall, and where the iudgement prepared is ſome generall calamity, there it muſt bee a generall conuerſion and comming vnto God, that muſt turne away his wrath. *Noah*, *Daniel*, or *Iob*, may deliuer their owne ſoules by their particular repentance, but they ſhall ſaue neither ſonnes, nor daughters, they onely ſhall be deliuered, but the land ſhall be waſted. If the Sea roare and ſwell, threatning to breake downe the banks, and ouerflow ſome large plaine; it is not the care of one or two in keeping or repairing their banks, that can preuent the inundation: euen ſo when God, (that I may vſe the phraſe of the Prophet *Ieremy*) *ſhall roare from aboue againſt a nation, and be ready to ſwallow them vp.* If there be not a generall indeauour in ſtopping him from making a breach, the indeuours of ſome few

Ezek. 14. 14.

few cannot preuent the deluge of his wrath. Would we therefore (the people of this land) preuent a generall calamity, which out of doubt hangs ouer our heads for our generall impiety; let vs troope together, and one call vpon another; *Come let vs returne vnto the Lord, for he hath spoiled vs and he will heale vs, he hath wounded vs, and hee will binde vs vp againe.* *Hos. 6.* *Let the children of Israel, and the children of Iuda Come Together, and weeping seeke the Lord their God:* *Ier. 50. Verse 4.* In briefe, let vs all ioyning together, hands, hearts, and voices, say truely and vnfeinedly vnto God, *Behold, wee come vnto thee;* and then there is no doubt to be made, but he will turne away his fierce wrath from vs. But alasse, what hope or likelihood is there of such a ioynt and generall returning vnto God? Euery man indeed seemes willing that others should turne from their sins and come vnto God, but the most are desirous to stay behinde themselues, or to be the very last in this returne. The Laity are much troubled, and heartily grieued at the Scandalous sins of the Clergy, and by all meanes they would haue vs forced to come vnto God ioyntly and generally, without leauing any

one ſtragler of our company behinde vs. But when the matter concernes themſelues, I ſee no ſuch generall diſpleaſure againſt their owne ſins, no ſuch care or indeauour to returne ioyntly and generally vnto God in their owne perſons. And I am afraid wee of the Clergy are quit with them in the ſame kinde: inueighing mightily againſt their ſins, and crying aloud vnto them, *Returne*, and yet in the meane time going on in our own. I might ſay the ſame of the great and mighty men of the land, compared with the poorer and meaner ſort of people. Both haue their proper and knowne faults; each of them are wondrous earneſt that the other might be reclaimed, and neither ſo forward as they ſhould be, in reforming themſelues. I ſee but one way to make vs come ioyntly and Generally vnto God; and that is, if we can fall amongſt our ſelues at an vnwonted and vnheard of, but moſt allowable and happy ſtrife, who ſhall be the firſt in comming vnto God. I am ſure there is euery where ſtrife more then enough for worldly precedence: I would I were able to kindle in your hearts a ſpirituall ambition about this Holy Precedence, in com-

comming vnto God. Let vs of the Clergie begin the contention; and as we haue a prerogatiue of more neere and speciall attendance vpon God in regard of our sacred function: so let vs striue to come first and neereſt vnto him in holines of conuersation. If we prooue dull and slacke herein, you the Nobles, the Magistrates, the great men of the kingdome, step forth, and claime your priuiledge. The high Officers of the Kingdome in Ciuill matters challenge a right of precedence before other men: but this is not all; take notice I pray, of your full right. You are stiled and inrolled, *Officers of Gods Kingdome*, and therefore you must hold your precedence, as well in the Seruice of God as of the King. If neither Priests nor Nobles, Ministers nor Magistrates, will put in for this right of precedence: you of the commonalty, you of the lowest and meanest of the commonalty, striue to get the precedence from vs both. It is neither pride nor euill manners, in this case to thrust before your betters. Nay, in so doing, you make your selues more holy then your Priests more noble then your Princes. It was the saying of a Philosopher; *Philosophia stemma non inspicit*, *wisd. 6. Verse 4.*

inſpicit. The Diuine may ſay as truly; *Theologia ſtemma non inſpicit*; Diuinity lookes not vpon pettigrees. Hee is nobly borne, who is borne againe of the Spirit; he is honourable, who makes it his honor, to be one of the firſt and formoſt in Gods ſeruice. *There is a ſeede of man which is an honourable ſeede: and this honourable ſeede are they which feare the Lord*, Now my wiſh and prayer vnto God, and my earneſt exhortation vnto you is this; that you would all grow ambitious of this honour, that you would lay aſide all other ſtrife, and make this your onely ſtrife, who ſhall firſt leaue his ſinnes, who ſhall firſt come vnto God. If this ſtrife were once a foot amongſt vs, no doubt but we ſhould come iointly and generally vnto God, as the Iſraelites here did.

Eccl. 10. 20.

2 The ſecond Circumſtance obſeruable in this Comming of the Iſraelites vnto God, is now to be conſidered; which is, the Celeritie or preſent haſte vſed in this their Comming. (*Wee Come*) in the preſent Tenſe; not wee will come ere long; not we will conſider vpon it when will bee our fitteſt time to come vnto thee. No ſuch matter. Here is obedience without delay, preſent comming, anſwerable vn-

to

to Gods present calling. When God calls vpon sinfull men to repent and returne vnto him, the most giue him an answer, not vnlike that which *Felix* gaue vnto *Paul*, *Goe thy way for this time, and when I haue conuenient time, I will call for thee againe.* But we must not refuse Gods conuenient time, and thinke to make him waite vpon our conuenient time. No, the practise of these Israelites must bee our patterne and instruction. *Obedientia non disputat Dei mandata, sed facit.* True obedience doth not debate the case when God commands, but presently falls in hand with executing his command. Excellent is that example of faithfull *Abraham*. God saith vnto him, *Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy Fathers house, vnto the land that I will shew thee.* And so *Abraham* presently departed. Euen so when GOD bids the true seed of faithfull *Abraham*, to leaue their corrupt affections, to forsake their vsuall wicked courses, and come into that land of Righteousnesse which hee shewes vnto them, they presently leaue the one, and come into the other. Delay is alwaies dangerous in matters of importance, but in this our comming

Act. 24. 26.

Prosp.

Genesis 12.

vnto God, it drawes three Mischiefes after it, and they are mighty mischiefes too.

1 The first is, an vnspeakeable and intollerable Indignity, offered vnto the Sacred Maiestie of God himselfe. For when God calls vs to come vnto him, What staies vs from comming, vpon whom doe we waite in the Interim? vpon whom (as much as in vs lies) doe wee make the great God of heauen to waite? I will tell you. It is our owne base and sinfull lusts which stay our comming vnto God. For as the new married man answers in the Gospell vnto Gods inuitation; *I haue married a wife, I cannot come*; so sinfull men answer when God inuites them to come vnto him by true repentance; We are wedded to our owne lusts; wee cannot come. But who hath made this marriage betwixt thine owne heart, and thy sinfull lust? Who is it that perswades thee, to forsake the commands of God thy Father, and of Holy Church thy Mother, and to cleaue vnto this strumpet, which thou calleſt thy wife? Sure the Author of this is neither better nor worse, but euen the diuell himselfe. Now consider seriously; is the infinite Maiesty of the great God of heauen, a fit

Luke 14.20.

Subiect can haue such a scorne and contumely put vpon him? What earthly King would not storme and rage at the Indignity, if calling one of his seruants to come vnto him, he should answer: Sir I am sporting with some of mine idle companions, and therefore your Highnes must bee content to waite my better leisure. But if hereunto hee should adde; heere is an old Rebell and Arch-traitor against your Maiesty, who perswades me not to come at your call, and I must be ruled by him; this would aggrauate the matter, and make it bee taken farre more hainously. This in effect is all that the Fornicator, the Drunkard, the Couetous, the Ambitious person hath to say for himselfe, why vpon Gods call he comes not presently vnto him. His sinfull lusts intreate him to imbrace them yet a little while longer: and the diuell whispers vnto his heart; *Da mihi quod præsens est, Deo quod futurum est, mihi florem ætatis, illi reliquias.* Giue me the present time, allow God the Future, giue mee the flower of thy youth, let God haue the bran of thine old age. Thus wretched men to the infinite dishonour of their Creator, let the diuell take his choice, and put God to waite for his leauings; *Nazianzen.*

things; which in all likelihood will in the end proue either nothing, or worse then nothing.

The second Mischiefe which followes vpon it, when wee come not presently at Gods call, is the manifold wrongs and hurt which thereby wee doe vnto our owne soules. Wicked men whilst they linger on the time of their returning vnto God, thinke that they doe their Soules great pleasure, at least that they doe them no great harme: but they consider not that whilst the Soule takes her sinfull pleasure, shee withall takes her deadly bane. Shee falls into a Consumption of spirituall grace, if euer shee were indued therewithall: and is not a Consumption a dangerous disease. Shee contracts a Schirros, or spirituall hardnesse, which makes the Soule scarcely penetrable by the dew of grace whensoeuer it falls vpon it: and is not this a grieuous malady? Last of all (if God be not wonderfully mercifull) shee comes to haue a cauterized conscience, and to be giuen ouer vnto a Reprobate sense, which is *vltimum Terribilium*, the last and most terrible euill that can befall a man, who is not yet in hell. These things considered should make a Christian who hath

any one of his own soule, to beware of the diuels Dilemma, who dwales adulterers in the point of Repentance, as the Philosopher did in the case of marriage. If a young man aske his counsell, when shall I repent, and returne vnto God? his answer will be, *Nondum*, not yet, it is a great deale too soone. If an old man aske him the same question, his answer will bee, *Nunquam*, not at all, it is now much too late. But we may build vpon it, that whosoeuer God calls vnto vs, (as at this very present hee doth vnto vs all,) it is neither too soone nor too late, and therefore let young and old presently come vnto him.

3 The third and last Mischiefe, which attends vpon Delay, is a Number of vnknowne dangers, whereupon such men put themselues, euery moment that they continue impenitent in their sins. They trifle away their time, and delay their comming vnto God; but in the meane time who can assure them that Gods vengeance will delay the comming vnto them? It is safe and wise counsell; *Make no tarrying to turne vnto the Lord, and put it not off from day to day: for suddenly shall the wrath of the Lord breake forth, and in thy securi-* Eccles. 5. 7.

& shalt thou be destroyed. The longer thou makest the patience of God expect thy returne, the heavier will the load of Gods judgments light vpon thee, for not returning. *Quo diutius expectat, durius ictum.* The longer he waites, the harder he strikes: Dost not thou tremble to thinke, that whilst thou art sporting with thy sinfull lusts, God may be Swearing *in his wrath, that thou shalt never enter into his rest?* What was it but delaying to come when God called, which drowned the old world, which consumed *Sodom* with fire and brimstone, and which at length carried away the Iewes into the Babylonian Captiuity? And why may not *England* feare, lest by the same fault, wee suddenly draw vpon vs the like destruction? *O consider this, yee that forget God, least he teare you in peeces, and there be none to deliuer you.* O consider this yee that feare God; and that he may imbrace you within his armes of mercy, say presently vnto him from an vnfeined resolution; *Behold, wee come vnto thee.*

Gregory.

Heb. 3. Verse 11.

Psal. 50. Verse 22.

3 Hauing spoken of the Generality of the Persons which must come, and of the Present haste to bee made in comming; the last Circumstance remaines, which is, the Direct Course

Courts, heare Gods (Weare your owne Thie.)
They seeme in a most Direct like vnto God
himselfe: and in this streight line, they moue
not onely towards him, or till they come fom-
what neere vnto him, but they come vp close vnto
him; neuer resting, vntill they come to rest,
as it were in his very bosome. This alone is
the Streight, Short, and perfect way of com-
ming vnto God; other courses are but crooked
by-paths, or circular compassings, and will
not answer the expectation of the Commers,
as shall be cleered vnto you in the particulars.
It is a rule in naturall Philosophie, Omnis
motus est propter indigentiam: Euerie thing
moues for supplying some want wherein it
stands. Now the sinner by this motion which
we all (repenting, returning, conuerting or
comming (for all is one) seekes after three
things, whereof no one can be had, but by
comming directly vnto God himselfe for it.
And the least of these three things is of more
worth, then all the wealth, all the honour, yea
all the world besides: and therefore must be
duly sought.

The first is Pardon, Pardon for all our sinnes
passed, for euerything wherein we haue offend-

gine

gine a more proper and direct course, than to come immediately and directly vnto God the Father, by the *True Way*, God the Sonne, taking for our guide God the Holy Ghost? In this motion there is no crooked turning into by lanes, no circular and friuolous running in a round, but a most direct and streight comming vnto God. And this is just as God would haue it. *O Israel, if thou returne, returne vnto me, saith the Lord: I, euen I am he, that putteth away thine iniquities for mine owne sake.* Ieremie 4. Esay 43. And therefore *Tertullian* said well in this case; *Quo fugiam paniteudo, nisi ad eius misericordiam cuius patientiam contempseram peccando?* Vnto whom shall I flie for pardon in repenting, but vnto his mercy, whose power I contemned in sinning? And as for pardon of faults, so likewise for Release from Punishments which we feele or feare, the same direct course vnto God must bee holden. For the same hand which hath wounded vs, can onely heale vs, the same mighty arme which hath broken vs, can onely binde vs vp againe, as the Prophet speakes. The young Prodigall when he came to his right minde, vnderstood that none but his Father could either pardon his faults, or Hosea 6.

free him from his miseries: and therefore his resolution is; *I will arise, and goe to my Father, and say; Father I haue sinned against heauen, and before thee, &c.* You know the gratious entertainment which hee found. Shall wee then when wee finde out selues troubled in conscience with the guilt of our sinnes, hope to get absolution and remission from sinnefull men, standing in as much need of remission as our selues? By no meanes: For, albeit *the ministery of Reconciliation* be committed vnto men; yet there was neuer man inuested with the Authority of Remission, but onely *the man Christ Iesus*, who was God and Man in vnity of Person. Shall wee when wee feele the smart of Gods scourges, or tremble for feare of some future punishments, hope to cleere the score by purchasing some plenary Indulgence from Christs pretended Vicar. Away with such foolery. Let the Pope first proue that he needs no pardon for his owne sins, or that he can pardon himselfe, and then let him trie what good his pardon can doe vnto others. And as for release from any punishment, whereunto God hath adiudged a sinner, I am sure that if it were but one fit of a burning

Luke 15.

2 Cor. 5. Verse 18.

Mat. 9. 6.

ague, the Popes plenary Indulgence, with that most fauourable and liberall clause, *Quantum se extendunt claues Petri*, can doe him no helpe or good at all. Doe we therefore seeke to be freed from the burden of sin which presseth our consciences, or from the burden of punishment which lies vpon our backes, or hangs ouer our heads, let vs take the onely streight and direct way, which is, by a true Faith, and a new life to come vnto God, and in so doing, we may assure our selues of finding that which we come for.

2 There is a second want, to wit, of sanctifying Grace, which the penitent soule hopes to haue supplied: for supply whereof there is no other possible way, but onely this, to come directly and immediately vnto God. For this grace whereby wee are enabled and strengthened to leade a godly, Righteous and Sober life, is a gift *that comes from aboue from the Father of Lights*, and therefore if any man lacke this heauenly gift, *let him* come to *aske it of God, which giueth to all men liberally*, and reproacheth no man, as the same Apostle speaketh. To imprint this lesson in our hearts, Blessed Saint *Paul* makes it a vsuall Salutation in the fore-

Iames 1. 17.

front of his Epistles; *Grace and Peace from God* Rom. 1. 7.
our Father, and from the Lord Iesus Christ. The
very heathen Philosopher had some glimme-
ring of this Truth, that all mans goodnesse is
Gods gift; which made him say, *Bonus vir* Seneca.
sine Deo nemo est. Nullus sine Deo bonus. There
is no good man, nor any good minde in any
man without God. Doth the soule therefore
of any man hunger and thirst after righte-
ousnesse, doth it long to be refreshed with the
dew of diuine grace, seeke it at the *Fountaine* Ier. 2. 13.
of liuing waters, and not in *broken pits, which*
can hold no such precious water. Some are so
foolish as to thinke spirituall grace may bee
found in holy water, in Reliques and such like
superstitious obseruations. Some hope to
fetch it from *Rome*, *Loreto* or *Ierusalem* by a
tedious and long pilgrimage. Some suppose
the directest and readiest way, is to beg it
of the Saints, and especially of the Blessed
Mother of our Saviour Christ. But God con-
veigheth not his grace into the soules of men,
through any of those channels. Wee must
come vnto him for it, and in the vse of his
ordinances, wee shall receiue heauenly grace
immediately from the hand of our heauenly

Parisiensis. Father. *Gratia immediate ex ipso Fonte descendit in cor humanum, aliam ad venam, aut alium ad cursum non habet.* Grace doth immediately descend into the heart of a man, from God the Fountaine of grace: other course or other cause it hath none. All therefore that thirst after this sanctifying grace must come directly vnto God for it. Here euery man will be ready to say; there is none of vs so wretched and prophane that comes not directly and daily vnto God, for this gift of heauenly grace. I will shew you what manner of men refuse to do this, and then I will leaue it to euery mans own conscience, whether hee be in the number, or no. Those who finde not themselues ouer-pressed, and wearied vnder the burden of their sinnes: Those who feele not in themselues a hungring and thirsting after righteousnes; those that care not for the meanes of obtaining grace, to wit, Prayer, the Word, the Sacraments: In briefe, those that are more desirous to enioy their sinfull lusts, then to subdue and conquer them: these, and all these refuse to come vnto God for his sanctifying grace. Nay, I may goe a step further; If God come & offer his grace vnto any thus

displeased, they are ready to thrust it backe; and had much rather obtaine from God (if it were possible) a dispensation to liue still after the sinnefull lustes of their owne hearts, than a power and strength to ouercome the sinnefull lustes of their owne hearts. If GOD should presently offer vnto vs all, our choice of these two; how many of vs would be at a stand which to choose? How many may we iustly suspect would choose the latter, and the worser part? I presse this no further; Let euery man iudge of himself by that which hath been sayd, whether he say vnto God, as these Israelites did, *Behold I come vnto thee*, for thy sanctifying grace.

Now there remains the third and last thing which a sinner returning seekes after, and that is Glory, or Eternall life. There were no great benefit reaped by comming vnto God for pardon of our misdeedes, and grace to liue well, if these two drew not after them the benefit of eternall life. But when we haue truly repented, obtained pardon, and indeuoured our best to lead a new and holy life; for all this our consciences will tell vs, that we fall short of deseruing eternall life: Surely then there is

but one direct course to obtaine it, and that is by addressing our selues as humble petitioners vnto God, and saying: *Behold we come vnto thee*, to begge that which we know wee
Rom. 3. cannot merit. *For all haue sinned, and are depriued of the glory of God, and haue no other hope to*
Rom. 6. *obtaine it, but by way of free gift, through Iesus Christ our Lord.* And yet let me tell you this; that if we come vnto God for it as we should, that is, *by faith and holinesse of life*: this verie comming is a most certain leading way thereunto, though not a deseruing cause thereof. It is a short but a sound determination of S. *Bernard*; that good works, or a godly life is, *Via regni, non causa regnandi.* The Apostle hath
Rom. 2. 2. 7. taught vs the same doctrine; *that by continuance in well doing, wee seeke glory and honour, and immortalitie and eternall life.* But, alas, how manie be there in the world that dream they seek after eternall life, and yet neuer take this direct course of comming vnto God for it? Will your proud Papisticall merit-mongers come to God for it and begge it at his hands? No sure. They will rather vrge God to bring it vnto them, and paie it as a due debt, which by their condigne merits they haue long ago deserued,

seruice; *secundum æquiualentium rei adrem*, as their Iesuiticall Doctors haue taught them to speake. Doe prophane Epicures, and vngodly worldlings seeke it by comming vnto God for it? No question lesse. They rather seeke it from the diuell; as if they beleeued not onely that boasting lye of his; *All the Kingdomes of the earth are mine, and to whomsoeuer I will, I giue them.* Luke 4. But as if they beleeued that which the Father of lyes durst not affirme; that the kingdome of Heauen was at his disposse, and that by his seruice it might be gained. Last of all, Doe hypocrites (thinke you) and dissemblers come to God for eternall life? Nothing lesse. They make a shew sometimes of comming towards God, & drawing very neere vnto him, but in their hearts they are resolued neuer to come at him. It should seeme they thinke to get into heauen, not by comming vnto God in the plaine and direct way of a liuely Faith and a holy life, but by deceiuing God, and slipping in at some blinde back-dore of their owne making. But to shut vp this point, and withall the former part of my Text. Let euery man that desires either pardon of his sins, or release from Gods iudgements, that hopes either

either for infusion of sanctifying grace here, or participation of eternall glorie hereafter, come to God for all these, and come to him in that direct way which he hath appointed. And thus much for the Israelites protestation of obedience.

We are now come to the other branch of my Text, which containes a Declaration of those Motiues which induced them to obey: in these words. (*For thou art the Lord, our God.*) Heere is a double chaine to binde men vnto obedience. The strong iron chaine of Gods infinite Power and vniuersall dominion, which ties all men alike: (*For thou art the Lord,*) The pleasant golden chaine of Gods speciall loue and mercy, which in speciall manner tied these Israelites vnto him. (*Our God.*) He that acknowledgeth God to be the vniuersall and Omnipotent Lord ouer all the world, feare should driue him to obey his commands. He which beleeues him to be *His God*, loue should draw him to obey his commands. He whom this double chaine cannot binde vnto obedience, is in a farre worse case then that *Demoniack* in the Gospell, *Whom no man could binde, no not with chaines.* Let vs beginne with the former.

Marke 5. 3.

God,

God is heere acknowledged, *The Lord*. Not a Lord, ouer this or that Nation, within the precincts of this or that place; but *The Lord*, ouer all nations, ouer all countries, ouer all Lords, ouer all Creatures. *I am The Lord, this is my name, and my glory I will not giue to another*, Esay 42.8. Now God is such an vniuersall Lord, in three respects:

1 Firſt, he is the Lord Creator, that makes all his ſubiects, that makes the ſubiects of al other Lords, yea, that makes the Lords themſelues, and that out of Nothing. Our bodies with all the members thereof, our ſoules with all the faculties thereof, are of his making. *It is he that made vs, not we our ſelues*. Not our earthly parents, who were vnable to frame the leaſt part of our bodies, much more vnable to breath into vs liuing ſoules. *Quæ filium generatio habet poteſtatem vt conci piatur, vt naſcatur, vt viuat*. He which begets a childe, hath neither the conception, the birth, nor the life of his owne childe, within the limits of his power. If our Parents had beene our Makers, we had beene but like dead idols, *which haue eyes and ſee not, eares and heare not, hands and handle not, feete and walke not*. This ground worke

Pſal. 100.

Lactantius.

beeing now laid, that God, is the Lord of all men by creation, let vs consider what force this ought to haue in drawing vs to obedience. First, I am sure, that God himselfe iudgeth it a most forcible motiue. Why else should he set such a *Memento* vpon it? *Remember thy Creator in the daies of thy youth.* Out of doubt God knew that it was impossible euen for a young man to grow rebellious, whilst he remembers the Lord to be his Creator. Why should God charge euery wicked and vngodly man, with an *Oblitus es Domini Creatoris tui, Thou hast forgot the Lord thy Maker*; but that he knowes, if this were not forgotten, his commands would neuer be disobeyed. Not onely God, but all good men haue conceiued the force of this motiue to be so great, that vpon the apprehension thereof, they presently conclude in their owne soules: *Come let vs fall downe and kneele before the Lord our Maker.* If Grace were wanting, yet Reason is able to make this inference; If God be my soueraigne Lord by right of Creation, I cannot resist him but to mine owne destruction. For *woe will be vnto him that striues with his Maker.* This reason makes all creatures though deuoid of reason,

Eccles. 12.

Deut. 32.18.

Esay 45. 9.

ſon, ready to obey at Gods becke. God made the Sunne; and therefore if hee bid it ſtand ſtill in the firmament, it dares not but ſtand, if he bid it goe backe ſo many degrees, it dares not but goe backe; though in its owne nature it reioyceth like a Gyant to runne his perpetuall courſe. God made the fire; therfore if he forbid, it dares not burne the three children, no not ſinge ſo much as one haire of their heads. The like obedience to their Creator hath ſhewen it ſelfe in the moſt fierce beaſts, in the moſt rauening birds, in the moſt venemous Serpents. What ſhall we ſay then is the cauſe, that this moſt forcible reaſon, hath ſo little force in mouing reaſonable men vnto obedience? That whereas euery childe if he bee asked who made him, can preſently anſwer, God; yet few men when GOD who made them askes for their obedience, haue learned to anſwer from the heart, Behold we obey. I can giue no better reaſon hereof then this: that men deceiue themſelues, whileſt they ſuppoſe they firmely beleeue that as an Article of their faith, which they onely aſſent vnto for company or faſhion ſake, becauſe other Chriſtians hold it for an Article. Such a

beleefe, is but a slight opinion swimming in the braine, it is no true and liuely faith, rooted in the heart. Such men when they call God their Creator, deale with him as the Iewes did with Christ; who clothed him in a royall robe, and salute him with the royall title of a King, and yet at the same time they scorne him, buffet him, and spit in his face. Doth not the Drunkard, the Fornicator, the Swearer, and in a word euery bold and rebellious sinner deale with God in the same manner? He calls him his Creator, he bowes the knee vnto him as to his Maker, and yet he feares not to cast the filth of his sins into the very eyes of this his Lord and Maker. *Cui res nomini subiecta negatur, nomine illuditur.* It is but a flat mockery to giue God high titles, and to denie him answerable duties: and those which doe it, are but Christians in name, and Infidels in deede and truth. The true Christian that beleeues from a sound heart God to be his Maker, cannot but in some good measure from the heart obey God his Maker.

Tertullian.

2 Secondly, GOD is not onely The Lord Creator, but also The Lord High Protector, or Generall Preseruer of all his creatures, and

more especially of mankinde. For God is not like an artificer; who when hee hath finished his worke, quits his hands of it, and leaues it for lasting or perishing to the strength of the materials, wherof it consists. No, we must conceiue a perpetuall *Manutenentia diuina* (as the Schoolemen terme it) without which, man and Angels, Heauen and earth, with all the creatures in the world, would in a moment fall backe into that Nothing, out of which they were at first made Something. Vpon this ground *Durandus* maintaines; *Verum est dicere de quauis creatura, quod quamdiu est, creatur a Deo.* We may truely say of any creature, that so long as it is, so long God Creates it. His meaning is, that Creation and this Conseruation are the same action being considered in God, and only differ thus: That Creation respects the Being of the Creature, as newly produced out of nothing by Gods infinite power: and this Preseruation respects the Being of the same creature, as continually supported from falling into nothing, by the same infinite power of GOD. But to let Schoole-speculations passe; the Scripture can best teach vs, how this title of Vniuersall Lord

Durand.

Protector belongeth vnto the Almighty. *He is*
Coloss. 1. 17. *before all things, and in him all things subsist*, saith
A the blessed Apostle. And againe, *Omnia portat*,
Heb. 1. 3. *Hee beareth vp all things by his mighty power*.
So that if this our great Supporter, should but for a moment withdraw his Preseruing power, the whole world in the twinkling of an eye, would vanish into Nothing. Neither is it our Being only, which depends vpon Gods continuall preseruation; but all our well-being is also deriued from his gratious prouidence and protection. It is this bountifull Lord which *opens his hand, and filleth vs with his blessings*; which holdeth his hand ouer vs, and keepes vs out of manifold dangers, which stretcheth out his helping hand vnto vs, and pluckes vs out of all our miseries. Such a Generall Powerfull and Carefull Lord Protector, is our God vnto vs. Now this being granted, is it not an effectuall motiue to make all men dutifull and obedient vnto such a Lord? I am sure that our Soueraigne Lords vpon earth, for this very cause of protecting their subiects, and maintaining them in peace and safety;
Rom. 13. Verse 6. challenge and iustly challenge, both obedience and tribute at their hands. How much

more then may the Soueraigne Lord of Heauen, who protects both Princes and People, challenge the tribute of obedience frō them both? Out of doubt he will and doth require it, and therefore it is our best to pay it. The wise *Salomon* tells vs, *There is no rising vp against the King.* And the Hebrewes haue a Prouerbiall saying: *Nigr andum est loco in quo Rex gloriatur.* It is time to leaue that Countrey where the King is not feared: as if alwaies some great iudgement were hanging ouer it. What then may we think is like to befall that Nation, which is vp in rebellion against their heauenly King, which deny obedience to their omnipotent Lord, and gracious Protector? I am either much deceiued, or this matter doth very neerely concerne vs. No Nation in the world hath seene more apparent effects of Gods admirable protection ouer them, then we haue done. No Nation in the world hath been more laded, and ouer laded with plenty of all manner of blessings, then we haue been: And (which I am sorrie may truly be added) no Nation in the World hath shewed themselues more graceless, and thankelesse and gracelesse, towards so gracious a Lord,

Lord, and mighty Protector then we haue done. I cannot thinke of the generall impiety of the times, but me thinkes I see with all a terrible blacke storme gathering ouer our heads: me thinkes I see God withdrawing his wonted fauourable protection from vs, and suffering vs to be ouerwhelmed with such iudgements, as our folly and impiety hath long ago deserued. There is but one meanes to preuent those miseries which hasten towardes vs; and that is, betimes to cease from further prouoking our mighty and gracious Protector. *Prouoke me not to anger by the workes of your handes, and I will doe you no harme:* it is Gods owne promise, by the mouth of the holy Prophet.

Ieremie 25. Verse 6.

3 I am now come to the third and last Respect, wherein God is truely stiled, *The Lord*; that is the Vniuersall Lord ouer all mankinde. And this is, in regard of his Iudiciary Office and Power, which makes him the true Lord Chiefe Iustice through the whole world. For the Office, it is in expresse termes ascribed vnto him by the Psalmist. *The Lord hath prepared his throne for iudgement; for he shall iudge the world with righteousnesse, and the people with equity.*

Psal. 9. 7.

equity. And this Office, doth not onely extend it ſelfe to the puniſhing of the wicked who hate God; but to Gods owne children alſo when they diſobey him. *I will viſit their tranſ-greſſions with the rodde, and their iniquity with ſtripes.* Pſal 89. 32. None but ſuch prophane Atheiſts, who wiſh God out of this Office, durſt euer denie it to belong vnto him. *Marcion* was anciently branded in the fore-head for this hereſie. *Iudicis officium à Deo remouet, & ei ſolum bonitatem adſcribit*, ſaith *Tertullian*. But no doubt long ſince, his owne experience hath made him recant this error in hell. It may be, though God haue this Office of an vniuerſall Iudge ouer all the world, yet this Circuit is ſo large, that he wants Power or Meanes fully to execute it. This cannot be imagined; the contrary ſo euidently appeares thorough the whole Scripture. *When all fleſh had corrupted their waies vpon earth*, an end of all fleſh is preſently determined by the Iudge of heauen; and the whole world is ſentenced to be drowned; and the ſentence is as eaſily executed, as if it had beene pronounced but againſt ſome one particular man. *When the crie of Sodome and Gomorrah had pierced the heauens.* God Gen. 6. 12. Gen. 18.

iudged them to be burned with fire and brimstone; and presently he rained fire and brimstone vpon their heads. I will not trouble you with heaping vp more examples of Gods power in this kinde; I had rather stirre you vp to feare and obedience, vpon consideration of the vnresistable power of this Supreame and Vniuersall Iudge. Shall the Lyon roare and shall not the beasts of the field quake? Shall the great Iudge of heauen threaten vengeance against rebellious sinners, and shall not dust and ashes fall downe at his feete, and humbly sue for mercy? Shall the Diuell himselfe vpon the knowledge of Gods supreame Iudiciary power beleeue and tremble, and shall men more Diueliſh then the Diuell beleeue God to be an Omnipotent Lord and Vniuersall Iudge, and yet neuer tremble at the matter? It were hard to thinke there were any such Gyants in the world, who durst fight against God, and despise both the Office and Power of this Soueraigne Lord, and Vniuersall Iudge, but that wee see them daily with our eyes, and heare them with our eares. Is not the strong Churh-robber one of these Gyants, who dares openly say; *Come let vs take the houses* *Psal.* 83.

of

of God into possession; neuer fearing that which followes: *O my God, make them like a wheele, and like stubble before the winde.* Is not the abominable swearer one of these Gyants, who dares tosse and tumble the reuerend name of God in his foule mouth, though God haue threatned that for such irreligious oathes the land shall mourne. Is not euery filthy fornicator, euery beastly drunkard, and in a word, euery shamelesse and daring sinner of the race of these Gyants; who knowing and confessing that this great Iudge hath already passed a sentence of death against these sinnes, 1 Cor. 6. 9. yet sport themselues with them, and gibe at the Iudge himselfe. *Tush, the Lord shall not see it, neither will the God of Iacob regard it.* But I hope there is none heere of this rebellious rout: nay I hope euery man heere present is in all humility & obedience ready to say vnto this great Lord and Iudge, as the Israelites doe in the Text. *Behold, wee come vnto thee, for thou art the Lord, our God.* And now let vs passe from the Generall Motiue, vnto the more speciall in the two last words, (*Our God.*)

(*Our God.*) The former Motiue was common to the Israelites with all other nations:

for God is the Creator, Protector, and Iudge of all men: but this is proper vnto them, as they made the Body of Gods visible Church, for it is the Church alone, which can challenge God by peculiar right to bee her God. And this shee may doe in a double respect. *Iure confederationis*, *Iure redemptionis*. By right of Couenant, or confederation; and by right of Ransome or Redemption.

1 First, by right of Couenant established betwixt God and the seed of *Abraham*. *I will establish my Couenant betwixt mee and thee; and thy seed after thee.* And for further ratification of this couenant, God would needs haue the seale of circumcision put vnto it. If this bee not enough, God ouer and aboue hath confirmed it, by swearing thereunto. *I sware vnto thee, and entred into a couenant with thee, and thou becamest mine.* In respect of this speciall Couenant, God claimed the Iewes for his speciall inheritance & peculiar people; and they challenged him for Their God, in a more speciall manner, then all the world besides could doe. Now as God was by a speciall couenant God of the Iewes vnder the Old Testament, so now he is become God of the Christians vnder the

Gen. 17. 7. *Verse* 10.

Ezek. 16. 8.

Now. Our Baptisme is the sealing of this Couenant, wherein the blessed Trinity, Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost, receiue the party Baptized into speciall fauour and protection: and the party there indents with the same blessed Trinity, so soone as he shall come to vnderstand this Couenant, presently *to forsake the Diuell and all his workes, constantly to beleeue Gods holy Word, and obediently to keepe his commandements.* Now I haue shewed the Nature and quality of this Couenant, which then warranted the Israelites, and now warrants vs Christians, to call God, *Our God*; let vs consider how forcible it is, or ought to be to draw vs all vnto obedience.

First, this very Couenant must put vs in minde of obedience; because otherwise wee loose the Benefit thereof, for not taking hold of the said Couenant. The Prophet *Esay* hath taught vs, that the keeping of Gods commandement, and chusing the things that please him, is the very taking hold of this Couenant: and therefore it will follow from the contrary, that he despising of Gods Commandements, and doing those things which he hates, is the loosing of this hold. *Chap. 56. Verse 4.*

Againe we are farther to consider, that all our happines or vnhappines in this life, and after this life, depends vpon the keeping or breaking of this Couenant. *If yee will consent and obey, you shall eat the good things of the land.* *But if you will not obey, but despise mine Ordinances, and breake my Couenant, then I will set my face against you, &c.* It is a Chapter worthy of our most diligent perusall. For in it as in a glasse we may cleerely see, how it comes about, that we the people of this Land, who were sometimes crowned with all Gods blessings, begin of late to be stripped out of them one after another, and are in danger of being deprived of them all. We may likewise see, from whence it comes that wee haue beene consumed at home with plague & pestilence, that abroad wee haue fallen before the sword of the enemy; in these and all other iudgements which haue or shall light vpon vs, we must take notice of *Our God*, as auenging the quarrel of this Couenant. What quarrell can God haue against vs about this Couenant? He hath a double quarrell. First, for our Hypocrisie, in that wee call him *Our God*, and make shew as if we were his peculiar people; in that we call him

Esay 1.19.

Leuit. 26. Verse 15.

Leuit. 26. Verse 25.

Our Father, and pretend that wee are his true children, and yet in the meane time wee will neither serue him as *Our God*, nor loue him as *Our Father*. It is Gods agreement with his people: *Thou shalt call mee*, saying, *My Father*, *and shalt not turne from me*. He that will needs call God Father, and yet will turne away from him in the course of his wicked life: If God call him sonne, it will be no more to his comfort, then when *Abraham* said to the glutton in hell. *Sonne, Remember that thou in thy life time tookest thy sinnefull pleasures, and therefore now thou must be content to vndergoe eternall tormentes.* *Ieremie* 3. *Verse* 19. *Luke* 16.

But yet God hath a farther quarrell against these Couenant breakers, and that is not only for their hypocrisie, but for their plaine treacherie. For as if it were not bad enough to forget the Couenant established betwixt God and them, they most traiterously account, *the bloud of this Couenant as an vnholy thing*, and make a new confederacy with Gods knowne enemies, the world, the flesh and the diuell. They shame not to boast and brag of this their new league: *We haue made a Couenant with death, and with Hell we are at an agreement.* *Heb.* 10. *Verse* 29. *Esay* 28. 15.

But

But let euery man that by vertue of the Couenant calls God his God, detest all hypocrisie, abhor all treachery, and remember that his happinesse depends not vpon the entring into a Couenant with God, but vpon the true keeping of the Couenant. And for the more effectuall stirring vp of euery man here present to repentance and newnes of life, according to the tenor of the Covenant, I will adde this one thing. That whatsoeuer our carriage hitherto hath been, this very Couenant may assure vs, that *Our God*, and *Our Father*, neither will nor can refuse graciously to accept vs into fauour, vpon our submission and amendment. He is ingaged by speciall promise. *If my people, among whom my name is called vpon, doe humble themselues and turne from their wicked waies, then will I heare in heauen, and be mercifull to their sinne, and heale their land.* 2 *Chron.* 7. 14. *Promissa hæc tua sunt, & quis falli timeat cum promittit ipsa Veritas?* *August.* These are thy promises, O Lord, and who needs doubt the performance, where Truth it selfe makes the Promise? But if any man should doubt whether this Promise be strong enough to binde God, to accept the submission of a rebellious seruant; yet there is no

doubt

doubt, but his tender fatherly affection is ſtrong enough, to make him accept the ſubmiſſion of a Repenting Childe. *Ephraim is my deare ſonne, therefore my bowels are troubled for him; and I will ſurely haue compaſſion vpon him, ſaith the Lord.* Let vs therefore now at laſt come vnto our God, with humble, lowly, and penitent hearts, and then wee ſhall ſpeede no worſe then the Prodigall childe did: That is, our louing Father will haue compaſſion vpon vs, *hee will run and fall vpon our neckes, hee will kiſſe vs, and put the beſt Robe, euen the rich Robe of his wel-beloued Sonnes righteouſnes vpon vs.* Ier. 3. 14. Luk. 15. 20.

There remaines the other title of Redemption to be briefly touched, in regard whereof the Iſraelites terme God, their God, and on the other ſide God alſo termeth them his peculiar people: And this Redemption was twofold: God was called their *Strong Redeemer*, and they were ſtiled *the people whom God had Redeemed*, in regard of that famous and miraculous deliuerance out of the Egyptian thraldome. God eſteemed this Temporall and Corporall redemption ſo great a benefit, and ſo forcible an inducement to Obedience, that hee thought it fit to bee ingrauen in the fore-

front of his ten Commandements. Yet this is not it which I purpose now to insist vpon. There is therefore another Redemption wrought by the bloudy Passion of the Messias; obscurely represented in the Leuiticall Sacrifices, more plainly described by the Prophets, but most euidently painted out vnto vs by the holy Apostles. This is our Spirituall and eternall Redemption, whereby we are redeemed out of the iawes of the diuell, from eternall Death and Damnation of body and soule, which otherwise, we must haue vndergone, & indured world without end. Now albeit the Generall Power of this redemption extend it selfe vnto the whole world, yet the Declaration & Application thereof belongs in speciall manner vnto the Church; & therefore it is the Church which out of this respect, calls God, her God; and it is likewise the Church, which for this cause God owns as his peculiar people. This is the Redemption whereof euery member of the church ought with holy *Iob*, to take speciall notice: *Scio quod Redemptor meus viuit.* *I know that my Redeemer liueth.* And not onely so: but I know that this my Redeemer hath ransomed both my body and soule, not

Iob 19.

with gold or siluer, but with his owne pre-
cious bloud; *to the end that being thus Bought* 1 Cor. 6. 20.
with a price, I may glorifie him both in body
and soule. If all which hath beene formerly vrged, cannot perswade men to returne to the obedience and seruice of God, yet this Motiue, that he is *Our God*, and that by Right of Redemption should inforce vs thereunto. Our Creation out of nothing was an infinite benefit, and ties vs straitly to God our Creator. But this our Redemption at such an inestimable price, when we were wotse then nothing, is infinitely greater then that other infinite benefit, and ties vs in a more straite band vnto God our Redeemer. Our Creation cost God no more but the word speaking, *Dixit & factum est, hee said it, and hee did it*; but our redemption was not so easily wrought; *Multa tulit fecitque Deus, sudauit & alsit.* What man so thankelesse that would not for euer acknowledge him for his good Lord and Patron, and striue to doe him all acceptable seruice, who had but redeemed him from the Turkish slauery, and rowing chained in their gallyes. How much more then stand we obliged in all duty and seruice vnto our God,

who hath redeemed vs from beeing the slaues of Sathan, from the chaines of darkenesse, and euerlasting damnation. They haue no sense of this Redemption, nor no part as yet in it, who are not inflamed thereby to

Tit. 2. 14. *serue God in holinesse and righteousnesse, and to become a peculiar people vnto him, zealous of good workes.* But alas, where shall God our Redeemer finde such zealous seruants, amongst millions of men that confesse and professe themselues to be redeemed with his blood? The World and the Flesh haue a world of Seruants at command; nay the diuell himselfe is so well attended, that Saint *Cyprian* brings him in, thus bragging against our Sauiour Christ, and insulting ouer vs silly and sinfull wretches. *Ego pro istis nec sanguinem fudi, &c.*

Serm. de Eleemosyna. I haue spilt no one drop of bloud for any of these, I haue taken no paines to doe them any good; nay all my study and paines euer was, and euer shall be, to bring them to death, and eternall damnation. Notwithstanding all this, *Tu si vales demonstra mihi Christe,* O Christ, (if thou canst) shew me so many, so busy, so painefull, so dutifull seruants of thine, as I am able to shew vnto thee euery where of mine,

O what a shame is it vnto vs all that beare the name of Christians, *Hic scit potuisse, & non potuisse refelli*: That such things may truely bee obiected against vs by the Diuell, and cannot truely be denied, or confuted by vs.

O what a griefe is it vnto our Lord Christ, that a cursed Murtherer should be able to entise away so many seruants from a blessed Redeemer? This point should rather be prosecuted with teares, then words; nothing now remaines, but that euery man heere present, search into his owne heart and life, inquire and finde out his owne proper sinnes, turne speedily from his wicked waies; and that all of vs say with a ioynt and constant resolution as these Israelites did: *Behold, wee come vnto thee, for thou art the Lord, our God.*

THat Almighty God who hath this day called vs vnto him by his word, draw vs vnto him by the effectuall operation of his holy Spirit; that so renouncing the seruice of the World, the Flesh, and the Diuell, and returning vnto the Seruice of our true Lord; wee may recouer his fauour here, and enioy his

FINIS.